

REMARKS

The Examiner's Action mailed on October 2, 2006, has been received and its contents carefully considered.

In this Response, Applicants have made no amendments. Claims 1 and 10 are the independent claims, and claims 1-16 remain pending in the application. For at least the following reasons, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 7-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over the combination of *Ramey et al.* (US 6,756,971 B1) with *Manser et al.* (US 6,388,660 B1). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended claim 1 recites a notebook computer wherein "the housing portion has *an internal surface having a receiving portion*" and "*a touch pad disposed onto the receiving portion; wherein the receiving portion of the internal surface prevents the touch pad from being exposed to an atmosphere outside of the housing portion*" (*emphasis added*).

That is to say, considering the claimed elements in a different order for the sake of clarity, a touchpad is disposed onto a receiving portion of an internal surface of the housing of the notebook computer, so that the receiving portion covers the touchpad and prevents the touchpad from being exposed.

Ramey et al. discloses a touch pad guard comprising a touch pad **12** and a touch pad guard member **60** having a flat side region **62**, wherein " the touch pad

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12 is located on the top surface **34** of keyboard housing **32**" (column 3, line 38-40).

However, the Office Action states that:

1. "The inner surface of touch pad guard **60** would then be the portion of the internal surface of the housing"; and
2. "This internal surface would then have a receiving portion in order to have the touch pad close to the external area of the housing for a user to utilize the touch pad **12**".

The Office Action apparently assumes that:

1. The flat side region **62** of the touch pad guard **60** is the portion of the internal surface of the housing; and
2. The touchpad **12** is disposed on something on the top surface **34**, and this something does not prevent the touch pad **12** from being exposed.

The touch pad **12** is therefore disposed on a portion of the internal surface, which is not the underside surface **62** of the touchpad guard **60**, because the touch pad **12** is not disposed on the underside surface **62**.

The Office Action admits that *Ramey et al.* fails to teach "wherein the receiving portion of the internal surface prevents the touch pad from being exposed to an atmosphere outside of the housing portion" and alleges that *Manser et al.* shows this feature.

Manser et al. discloses, e.g. in FIG. 7, an input pad integrated with a touch pad comprising a top surface **86**, input pad covers **72**, **82** and a touch pad **80**. The input pad covers **72**, **82** are recessed in the cavities **74**, **84**, and are slidable from this position to a position over the touch pad **80**. That is, the touch pad **80** is not disposed on the input covers **72**, **82**.

The Office Action alleges that *Manser et al.* discloses "a notebook computer with a hidden touchpad wherein a receiving portion of an internal surface prevents the touchpad from being exposed to an atmosphere outside of the housing portion", and then goes on to assert that FIG. 7 of *Manser et al.* shows that "the housing surface 86 has two slidable pad covers 72 and 82 which can cover the receiving portion for the touch pad 80 such that the touch pad is protected from an atmosphere outside of the housing 86".

If the "slidable pad covers" **72** and **82** of *Manser et al.* are employed to "cover the receiving portion" as asserted in the Office Action, then this would *not* show that the *receiving portion* "prevents the touchpad from being exposed" as alleged. On the contrary, it would show that the *slidable pad covers* prevent the touchpad from being exposed

The receiving portion, as defined in claim 1, is where the touch pad is disposed, and the receiving portion also "prevents the touch pad from being exposed". As previously noted, the touchpad in *Manser et al.* is *not* disposed on the slidable pad covers **72** or **82**. Consequently, the slidable pad covers cannot

correspond to the receiving portion, and if they prevent the touch pad from being exposed, then this is *not* a showing that the receiving portion does so.

Replacing the touchpad cover taught by *Ramey et al.* with the touchpad covering device taught by *Manser et al.* does not result in the claimed invention, because neither *Ramey et al.* nor *Manser et al.*, whether taken separately or in combination, teach or suggest “a touch pad disposed onto the receiving portion; wherein the receiving portion of the internal surface prevents the touch pad from being exposed to an atmosphere outside of the housing portion”, as presently claimed.

For at least this reason, claim 1 patentably defines over the cited art, and is allowable, together with claims 2, 4 and 7-9 that depend therefrom.

Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over the combination of *Ramey et al.* with *Manser et al.* and *Garner* (US 6,501,462 B1). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 3 depends from claim 1, which is allowable, and as *Garner* fails to overcome the deficiencies of *Ramey et al.* and *Manser et al.* with respect to claim 1, therefore claim 3 is also allowable.

Claims 5, 6 and 10-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over the combination of *Ramey et al.* with *Manser et al.* and *Keely, Jr. et al.* (US 2002/0063694 A1). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 5 and 6 depend from claim 1, which is allowable, and as *Keely, Jr. et al.* fails to overcome the deficiencies of *Ramey et al.* and *Manser et al.* with respect to claim 1, therefore claims 5 and 6 are also allowable.

Amended claim 10 recites "A method for manufacturing a notebook computer with a hidden touch pad, comprising: forming a housing having an *internal surface having a receiving portion*; and *adhering a touch pad onto the receiving portion*; wherein the *receiving portion of the internal surface prevents the touch pad from being exposed* to an atmosphere outside of the housing".
(emphasis added).

Neither *Ramey et al.*, nor *Manser et al.*, nor *Keely, Jr. et al.*, whether taken separately or in combination, teach or suggest that "the *receiving portion* of the internal surface prevents the touch pad from being exposed", as recited in claim 10. *Ramey et al.* and *Manser et al.* fail to teach or suggest such a feature as already explained with respect to claim 1, *supra*. *Keely, Jr. et al.* is relied upon in the Office Action solely for the adhesive member disclosed in ¶[0041] thereof, and also fails to teach or suggest such a feature.

For at least this reason, claim 10 patently defines over the cited art, and is allowable. Claims 11-16 depend from claim 10, and are allowable at least because claim 10 is allowable.

It is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Such action and the passing of this case to issue are requested.

Should the Examiner feel that a conference would help to expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is hereby invited to contact the undersigned counsel to arrange for such an interview.

Should any fee be required, however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fee to our Deposit Account No. 18-0002, and advise us accordingly.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date

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